



# South Carolina Public Charter School District

## MEMORANDUM

To: School Leaders

From: Vamshi Rudrapati, Director of Federal Programs

Date: December 15, 2015

Subject: HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY and Screening Potential English Language Learners

### Home Language Survey

The home language survey (HLS) must be completed for all students at the time of their initial enrollment in school. This form must be signed and dated by the parent or guardian. It must be kept in the student's permanent file. The purpose of collecting the HLS is to make sure that all students receive the education services they need. The law requires us to ask questions about students' language backgrounds.

However, in order to efficiently identify potential English language learners (ELL) and to avoid:

1. HLS completed at your school(s) differing from the HLS completed at the child's previous school
2. Child's previous school's failure to respond to your school's request for records

And

3. As the State Department of Education, Department of Federal Education Programs (Title III-ESOL) has advised the schools not to conduct the enrollment interview:

Starting Monday, January 04, 2016, all schools in the South Carolina Public Charter School District are required to avoid the collection of a new home language survey by requesting the items below as part of their request for records process.

- Home Language Survey
- English Language Learner (ELL) Initial Placement Screener
- Most Recent State Language Proficiency Test Scores
- ELL Accommodation Plan

The school should only require parents/students to complete the home language survey for those students who will be attending school in the United States for the first time. This will include the pre K and Kindergarten students.

The school needs to have a copy of the HLS for ALL students in their permanent folder and DO NOT PURGE should be indicated.

### Screening ELL students

Upon reviewing the HLS, schools must then determine if potential ELL students are in fact English Language Learners through a valid and reliable test that assesses English language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing. For the 2015-2016 school year, SCPCSD will continue to use Pre LAS (k-1) and LAS online (2-12) to identify potential ELL students.

LAS Screener will be used to screen potential ELL students when:

**Transfer students:** After documenting three attempts of requesting records from that the previous school, a new home language survey must be completed. If the parent or guardian responded to one or more of the three questions with a language other than English, the student should be screened to identify the English language proficiency.

**Students attending school for the first time in the United States:** If the parent or guardian responded to one or more of the three questions with a language other than English, the student should be screened to identify the English language proficiency.

Schools must assess students' English language proficiency within 30 days of enrollment at the beginning of the year and within ten days after the beginning of the year.

Desk audits will be conducted during second semester to verify compliance for home language surveys and to determine if screenings are conducted as required.



## South Carolina Public Charter School District

Parents do not have a right to refuse a screener and/or state English language proficiency test. These tests are required for compliance with the basic requirements under federal Law.

### Attachments:

- Guidance from U.S. Department of Justice (Civil Rights Division) and U.S. Department of Education (Office of Civil Rights)
- SCPCSD Home Language Survey
- Sample Request for Records Template

CC: Elliot Smalley, Superintendent

Dr. Robert Compton, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Standards

